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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINGSTON 001734

SIPDIS

AIDAC

STATE ALSO PASS TO USAID  
USAID/W FOR A/AID ANDREW NATSIOS,  
DCHA/AA MHESS, WGARVELINK, LROGERS  
DCHA/OFDA KISAACS, GGOTTLIEB, MMARX, RTHAYER, MPOPP, SWESTRICK  
USAID/LAC FOR AA/LAC, LAC/CEN, LAC/CAR, FOR GBARTH, DRILEY,  
DCHA/FFP BKRAHAM, LLANDIS, DWELLER  
STATE WHA/CAR FOR BBENT, EWOLFSON  
USDOC FOR ITA/TD/OETCA/WDEAN BUSBY  
3134/USFCS/IO/WH/REBECCA MAN  
4322/ITA/IEP/WH/OMCB/MBROOKS  
SANTO DOMINGO FOR USFCS  
SAN JOSE FOR TCALLAGHAN, BRIDGETOWN FOR JLEONARD  
BRUSSELS FOR USEU PLERNER  
GENEVA FOR NKYLOH, RMA  
NSC FOR JMELINE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: USAID/OFDA Hurricane Dennis Situation Report 1

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Summary  
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1. Weather conditions are improving in most parts of Jamaica from the passage of Hurricane Dennis on July 7, 2005. The Government of Jamaica's Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) is compiling damage reports from community disaster committees in the Parishes. So far the most affected parishes are St. Thomas and St. Mary in the eastern part of the island. The Meteorological Service has discontinued the hurricane warning for Jamaica as Hurricane Dennis continues to move away. The island is now outside the range of hurricane and storm force winds associated with the tropical cyclone. USAID/OFDA in Jamaica is coordinating with ODPEM, the Jamaica Red Cross, and U.S. Embassy officials regarding upcoming damage assessments and possible U.S. Government (USG) humanitarian assistance. End Summary.

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Hurricane Dennis Misses Jamaica  
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2. Hurricane Dennis skirted the Jamaican North Coast on 07 July, without making landfall on Jamaica. The Hurricane brought large amounts of rain to the northeastern and southeastern coast of Jamaica. This has caused flooding in many communities in the region and made many secondary routes impassable to land traffic.

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Status Reports  
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3. According to ODPEM up to 6pm on July 7 2005, the effects of Hurricane Dennis had affected 27 communities across four parishes in eastern Jamaica. At the time they reported 65 shelters in 11 parishes open with a population of more than 1,900 people. ODPEM reports that some shelters are facing food distribution difficulties, as new arrivals are not bringing sufficient food supplies with them. There has been 1 unconfirmed reported death in Seaforth, St. Thomas. No other casualties assisted with the event have been reported to date. Most early reports are of flooding, overflowing rivers and gullies and landslides in the eastern parishes of St. Thomas, St. Catherine, Kingston and St. Andrew (including 4 houses washed away).

4. The GOJ and ODPEM reacted rapidly to activate their staff and put in action their shelter plan. Both Radio and Television provide timely information to the population on precautions that should be taken and the population reacted in an orderly manner. The Hotel association of Jamaica also made the appropriate and necessary plans for the large tourist population on the North coast. ODPEM has requested the generation of Parish needs lists from their Parish Disaster Committees.

5. The Norman Manley and Donald Sangster

International Airports were closed on July 7 and reopened at 10a.m. local time. Some Flooding is reported in 3 communities in St. Thomas, with landslides and overflowing rivers in Hagley Gap, Hillside, Lloyds and Morant Bay in St. Thomas. In St. Andrew, there were reports of blocked roads from landslides, houses washed away and the destruction of a Banana Plantation in Durham Gap in the Blue Mountains. Flooding is also reported in Kingston along the Norman Manley Highway and Washington Gardens.

16. ODPEM has reported that the need for search and rescue equipment to reach communities isolated and stranded from flooding, high waters, and landslides. Communities were isolated by rising waters and the fire brigades arranged for their movement to safe ground. Sections of the Bangor Ridge Community have been evacuated by the Portland Parish Council. Rescue operations are now being attempted in the following sections of the island which are under threat from rising waters: Seaforth, and Lloyds in St. Thomas; Gordon Town, Bull Bay, and Hope River in St. Andrew.

17. As of the last received situation report from ODPEM, the only need at this time is for search and rescue equipment. USAID/OFDA recently provided 8 zodiac-type boats with motors for Hurricane Ivan response operations in Sept 2004. OFDA Staff will coordinate with ODPEM on the utilization of these boats for the search and rescue operations. ODPEM is currently doing a full assessment of damages and needs of the affected areas and will provide a full report on response actions and needs. No request for outside assistance has yet been made by ODPEM. Once the full assessment is made, there may be a further request for assistance.

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Cayman Islands and Cuba on Alert for Dennis  
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18. All warnings and watches have been lifted for the Cayman Islands. A hurricane warning is in effect for the Cuban provinces of La Habana, Cuidad de La Habana, Matanzas, Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, Sancti Spiritus, Ciego de Avila, Camaguey, Las Tunas, Granma, Santiago de Cuba, Holguin, and Guantanamo. A hurricane watch remains in effect for the Isle of Youth and the province of Piar del Rio.